

REMARKS

Claims 13-32 are pending. Reconsideration of the pending Claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Examiner Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner, Youpaporn Nilanont, and the Examiner's Supervisor, Jeffrey C. Pwu, for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative, Sanders N. Hillis (reg. no. 45,712), during the telephonic interview of September 10, 2009 in which Claims 13, 25, and 29 were discussed. U.S. Patent No. 6,842,773 to Ralston et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0015554 to Wilson, and U.S. Patent No. 6,167,435 to Druckenmiller et al. were also discussed. During the discussion, it was agreed that none of the cited references taught each and every limitation of the pending claims. It was further agreed that further consideration and search would be needed following submission of the present response.

The Claim Rejections pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 13, 15-19, and 24 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,842,773 to Ralston (hereinafter "Ralston"), and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0015554 to Wilson (hereinafter "Wilson"). In addition, Claims 14 and 22 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Ralston, Wilson, and common knowledge in

the art. Further, Claims 20 and 21 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, Wilson and U.S. Patent No.

6,581,072 to Mathur et al. (hereinafter "Mathur"). Claim 23 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, Wilson and

U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0243844 A1 to Adkins (hereinafter "Adkins"). Claim

25 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, Wilson and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0132607 to Castell et al. (hereinafter "Castell"). Claims 26-28 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, Wilson, Castell and U.S. Patent No. 6,167,435 to Druckenmiller et al. (hereinafter "Druckenmiller").

Claims 29-32 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston and Druckenmiller. Applicant respectfully asserts that the cited references fail to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the presently pending claims, as discussed during the telephonic interview.

For example, Claim 13 describes that the terminal station is further configured to transmit the received identification information of the respective sender over the first communication network; and a relay apparatus is configured to receive the identification information of the respective sender transmitted from the terminal station over the first communication network, and store the received identification information in association with an email address of a user of the terminal station. Claim 13 also describes that the relay apparatus is further configured to control the

terminal station to register the email address of the user of the terminal station as a recipient email address at the transmitting apparatus of the respective sender identified with the identification information.

None of the cited references teach or suggest a relay apparatus configured to control a terminal station to register an email address of a user of the terminal station at a transmitting apparatus of a respective sender, or a relay apparatus configured to receive identification information of a respective sender transmitted from a terminal station over a communication network, and store the received identification information in association with an email address of a user of the terminal station. Instead, as discussed during the telephonic interview, the cited portion of Ralston simply describes that unsolicited email is filtered and sent to a bulk mail folder and other e-mail is sent by default to an inbox folder. (Col. 4 lines 54-56) Ralston also describes an approved list containing names of known entities that regularly send large amounts of solicited email to users. (Col. 4 lines 58-59) Ralston further describes that members are added to the approved list based on user complaints to a customer service representative that solicited emails are being stored in the bulk mail folder by mistake, or by an automated mechanism that adds names to the list, such as when a threshold amount of users complain about improper filtering. (Col. 4 line 66 – Col. 5 line 12) Moreover, as also discussed during the telephonic interview, contrary to the assertions on page 4 of the office action, Wilson fails to teach or suggest a relay apparatus configured to control the terminal station to register an email address of a

user of the terminal station as a recipient email address at the transmitting apparatus of the sender identified with the identification information as described in Claim 13.

Instead, the cited portion of Wilson simply describes notification of the user upon receipt of unknown email addresses (paragraph [0028]), or when "ping pong" emails

occur between users both issuing "challenges" of junk emails to each other as described by Wilson. Thus, neither Ralston nor Wilson teach or suggest each and every limitation of Claim 13.

In another example, Claim 25 describes a relay apparatus that includes a first communication unit configured to receive identification information from a terminal station over a first communication network, the identification information identifying a sender of an email which a user of the terminal station wishes to receive; and a storage unit configured to store the identification information received by the first communication unit in association with an email address of the user of the terminal station. Claim 25 also describes a processor configured to direct the terminal station to transmit a request to register the email address of the user as a recipient email address at a transmitting apparatus of the sender identified with the identification information. Neither Ralston nor Wilson teach or suggest such limitations. Instead, as previously discussed, Ralston describes a manual system in which user complaints are used by a customer service representative to add to an approved list, and Wilson simply describes a notification mechanism for unknown received emails.

In still another example, the method of Claim 29 describes the relay device receiving from the terminal station identification information of the information providing server, the identification information obtained by the terminal station from the information providing server, and the relay device directing the terminal station to register with the information providing server to receive communications from the information providing server. Neither Ralston nor Druckenmiller teach or suggest such limitations. Instead, Ralston simply describes unsolicited emails and an approved list generated based on user complaints received by a customer service representative. The cited portion of Druckenmiller, on the other hand, describes generation by a primary system of a unique token that is associated with an email address of a user upon receipt of a subscription request to join a mailing list. (Col. 2 lines 66-67 and Col. 3 lines 22-24) Druckenmiller's token is used to validate a subscription request of the user using an automated verification message to the user containing the token, and a confirmation message from the user that also includes the same token. Thus, neither Ralston nor Druckenmiller teach or suggest a relay device receiving identification information of an information providing server from a terminal station, or a relay device directing a terminal device to register as described in Claim 29.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent Claims 13, 25, and 29, and the respective claims dependent therefrom are not taught, suggested or disclosed by the cited references either alone or in combination. Accordingly, the application is now in

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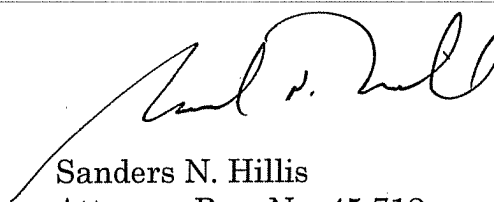
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condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner deem a telephone conference to be beneficial in expediting examination and/or allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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